GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:288
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2016
Cancer Drug Prices
Arunmozhithevan Shri A.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per a study, the cancer drugs appear to be least affordable inspite of lowest prices of drugs in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the cancer drugs and its treatment is almost out of reach for a substantial number of patients in the country and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to make available the medicines used for treatment of cancer affordable and free treatment in all hospitals across the country?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 288* FOR 05TH AUGUST, 2016

(a) to (d): As per a study based on the list prices, there is large difference in median retail prices of 23 cancer drugs across seven countries under study. The study identified highest retail price in the United States of America and the lowest in India and South Africa. Many of the Cancer drugs are costly. However, First Schedule of Drug Pricing Control Order (DPCO), 2013 also contains drugs used for the treatment of Cancer for which ceiling prices have been fixed.
Though public health is State subject, Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments under free drug service initiative and National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) under National Health Mission based on their Programme Implementation Plans. To make available Cancer and Cardiovascular drugs at discounted prices, Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) outlets have been opened at 7 Central Government institutions. Jan Aushadhi stores are set up by Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide generic drugs at affordable prices.
In addition to Cancer diagnosis and treatment by the State Governments Health Institutions, Central Government Institutions also provide facilities for diagnosis and treatment of Cancer. Central Government is implementing a Tertiary Care Cancer Centre scheme in the country under which setting up of State Cancer Institutes and Tertiary Care Cancer Centre is being assisted. Oncology is focus area in many of upgraded institutions under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna and new AIIMS.
Financial assistance for life threatening diseases, to the patients living below poverty line, is provided by Central Government under the schemes Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN), Health Minister's Cancer Patient Fund (HMCPF), State Illness Assistance Fund (SIAF) and Health Minister's Discretionary Grant (HMDG).
****